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Council report blasts plan for 18,000 homes

By JAMES COLASANTI
james.colasanti@nqe.com

BASILDON Council has blasted Government plans for up to 18,000 new homes in the district, labelling them unrealistic and unsustainable.

Proposals have been put forward to build up to 900 new homes in the district every year, for the next 20 years.

The proposed new targets, revealed by the East of England Regional Assembly, could mean 18,000 new homes being built in the district by 2031.

The council says the plans

- All homes would be built in district by 2031
- That is 900 houses a year for next two decades

could create an intolerable strain on the area's roads, schools, and health services, and has urged local residents to voice their objections.

A report, set to go before Basildon Council's cabinet tomorrow, said: "The scenarios appear to be mechanistic and statistical in nature, with little input on their real life impacts".

It said a lack of infrastructure

support from the Government has already made it "extremely challenging" to meet existing housing targets, which require a building rate of 650 a year, to complete a total of 10,700, between 2001 and 2021.

The report adds the crippling effect of the recession on the housing sector and construction industry would make any increase in targets unrealistic.

It suggests it would be more realistic to decrease the existing 650 per year target, to reflect the current downturn in the economy.

The report concludes: "The high rates of new housing growth proposed for the Basildon district

are considered to be unrealistic, unsustainable, and not capable of delivery. They cannot be supported."

Frank Tomlin, Basildon's cabinet member for housing, said: "We have got this problem that we only have so much land in the district.

"If we try to cram more and more people into the open space, we have a situation which will inevitably have a detrimental effect on our existing residents' quality of life."

To have your say on the proposals, visit www.eera.gov.uk

All comments must be received by November 24.